

years, but that is not how we lead our lives now. We may have 7 to 10 jobs over the course of our lifetime, and health care reform has to reflect the way that people lead their lives.

People shouldn't feel trapped in a job because they are afraid to lose health care coverage for themselves or their child, and no life decision should hinge on whether you have health insurance.

Health care reform is about expanding coverage, creating competition and meaningful choice. And right here in Congress we are working to create a uniquely American system of health care that provides for affordable, high-quality care to all Americans.

You have seen firsthand why we need reform of the health care system, and you know that we have to lower costs and cover all Americans. The cost of this Congress doing nothing to reform the current health care system is catastrophic, and the status quo is unsustainable. I cannot stress enough the urgent need for health care reform.

□ 1015

Vietnam Continues to Egregiously Violate Human Rights

(Mr. CAO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam recently held that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam need not be put back onto the CPC because, based on his views, Vietnam has made sufficient improvement to its human rights policies to warrant exclusion. But recent developments show how wrong the Ambassador is.

Not to mention Vietnam's other numerous human rights violations, just days ago the Vietnam Government arrested Mr. Le Cong Dinh, a prominent lawyer in Vietnam, for openly defending human rights. Vietnam's arrest of Mr. Dinh contradicts its own alleged commitment to internationally accepted criteria on human rights.

Today I call upon the Members of this body to urge Vietnam to release Mr. Dinh immediately and unconditionally, as well as all prisoners in detention, for peacefully expressing their views. His immediate release will be a significant step in affirming Vietnam's intention to respect the rule of law.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, as our country embarks on a great national debate about health care, we are already seeing the fear-mongering beginning, that people are going to lose their health insurance.

Let us be very clear. As President Obama says, if you have health insurance and a doctor, if you like your

health insurance and your doctor, you will keep your health insurance and your doctor. And there is no group for which that is more true than our military personnel and our veterans.

Recently, at the Groton Navy base, I was at the PX being approached by individuals asking if President Obama was going to take away their TRICARE and their veterans benefits. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, we are going to be strengthening veterans benefits and TRICARE under the great leadership of the VA Secretary, Eric Shinseki.

So let the message be clear. Before all the fear-mongering, and before all the misleading information begins, if you are serving our country, if you are wearing the uniform of our Nation, your health care will be protected and strengthened under President Obama's health care reform effort.

REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM GIVES THE PATIENT THE POWER

(Mr. CASSIDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, critical to health care reform is who has the power. Currently, the payer has the power. Ask a Medicaid recipient if she has the power or the government agency which pays. Ask a patient denied a procedure if he has the power or the insurance company which pays.

Reform must fix what's broken. What's broken is who has the power. Real reform gives the patient the power.

Government already controls 50 percent of health care spending. By controlling dollars, bureaucrats control care.

The President's plan doubles down on government control. It doubles down what is broken. It invests in government, not in patients. How can we trust bureaucracies that broke health care to fix health care? Trust government that always overpromised and underfunded?

Until reform transfers power from payer to patient, there is no reform. Give the power to the patient.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, every day my constituents share with me their personal stories. I often hear about their passport or mortgage troubles. But perhaps more than any other concern, they tell me of their family's struggle to stay healthy or to get treatment when they become sick without health insurance.

They tell me how they have worked all their lives, only to lose their retirement savings when they need serious medical treatment.

These stories are unacceptable, just as it is unacceptable that one in five

Americans are uninsured. Now is the time to act. For each day we delay, an additional 14,000 Americans lose coverage.

There are four items that must be included in the final legislation to fix our health care system. First, we must ensure coverage so that everyone has access to health insurance. Second, we must improve the quality of care. Third, we must contain costs while investing in preventative care. And finally, individuals must be guaranteed their choice of health insurance plans and doctors. If we can pass a bill that incorporates these four principles, we will have made a real and lasting impact on the lives of people.

A DRACONIAN CUT

(Mr. ROE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, yesterday on the House floor, I offered an amendment to fully fund President Obama's budget request for the Federal prison system, and it was called a "draconian cut." I'm sure President Obama would be surprised to learn his recommended level would be greeted by such hostility by his own party, considering he proposed spending \$384 million more in fiscal year 2009, an increase of 6.8 percent.

Only in Washington, DC, is a 6.8 percent increase called a "draconian cut." Back in Johnson City, where I was mayor, we had a very simple philosophy. We spent less than we took in.

When I arrived in Washington, DC, I learned the President's philosophy was to borrow more than you take in and then spend all of that. Apparently, congressional Democratic philosophy is borrow even more than the President and then spend that.

I hope it's apparent that we are addicted to spending. I hope we adopt my amendment today and send a message, a small message, that this Congress is not entirely tone deaf to the fact that we have record deficits and runaway spending.

THE RECOVERY ACT IS WORKING

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, in just over 100 days, the Recovery Act is already at work providing immediate relief for hard-hit communities and families, creating and saving jobs, and jump-starting thousands of shovel-ready projects all across America.

Our economic problems were not created in 100 days and they will not be saved in 100 days. But thanks to the Recovery Act, we are meeting the greatest economic challenges in at least a generation.

There are early signs of progress across the country. For instance, the \$8,000 first time home buyer tax credit has helped get the housing industry back in shape.

There will be work on 1,129 health centers in all 50 States. We'll begin work on 107 national parks. We're going to start rehabilitation and improvement projects at 98 airports, and over 1,500 transportation projects. There will be 135,000 education jobs, improvements on 90 veterans hospitals and medical centers. Throughout the country, the Recovery Act is working.

2010 CENSUS

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, the 2010 census will mark the 23rd census in our Nation's history. Although the manner in which the data is collected has evolved over time, an accurate count of our country's residents remains essential to the future of rural communities.

As competition increases for both government and private resources, it is imperative every rural American be counted during the 2010 census. In rural communities especially, door-to-door counting often proves difficult and time-consuming and can result in undercounting, which, in turn, means rural areas get left out.

It is important census funds are used as effectively as possible to ensure outreach into rural areas. This isn't a case of rural versus urban, but it's a chance for those of us in rural America to stand up and be counted.

THE CIA SHOULD RIGHT THE WRONGS OF THE PAST

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this week, The New Yorker's Jane Mayer, reported on the CIA's abduction, rendition and torturing of an innocent man.

A businessman named Khaled al-Masri, was abducted in one country, renditioned to another, where he was stripped naked and chained and given putrid water to drink.

A number of CIA officials believed from the beginning that he was innocent, but his CIA supervisor, who has since been promoted twice, overruled them. Finally, 149 days later, they went over the supervisor's head, insisting that his innocence be acknowledged, and got him released.

Another CIA captive froze to death, chained to a concrete floor and was buried in an unmarked grave.

Mr. Speaker, as Director Panetta tries to restore the agency's reputation, it is necessary that he not only acknowledge the wrongs of the past, but that he not promote those who committed them.

THE MOST FISCALLY WASTEFUL CONGRESS EVER

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes we will begin voting on 26 amendments to the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bill, but the overriding problem is that this bill is a 12 percent increase to \$65 billion.

At a time when families and small businesses all over this country have been tightening their spending, at a time when foreclosures and bankruptcies are still at record levels, the Federal Government keeps going on its merry way, spending like we have just boocous of cash.

All this comes after the \$787 billion stimulus bill which the Washington Post said was a "massive financial windfall" for Federal agencies. A 12 percent increase in times of 3 percent inflation, when our national debt is now over \$13 trillion, is just ridiculous.

We would not be having all these problems if we'd had fiscally conservative Congresses for the last 45 years. Now we seem to have the most fiscally wasteful Congress we have ever had.

SPECULATORS ARE DRIVING UP THE PRICE OF OIL

(Mr. PERRIELLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERRIELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of consumers facing rising prices at the pump. How is it that demand for oil can drop, supply can rise, and yet costs can increase? This defies the rules of the free market.

And the answer is the speculators who continue to drive up the price of oil.

We hear talk here about protecting consumers, but I'm sick of seeing crocodile tears shed for consumers that are filling up the swimming pools of our speculators.

We hear an energy plan, particularly from the other side of the aisle, that has no long game, no short game, and no medium game. It's like taking our country into the U.S. Open with no short game on the greens, no long game for the tees, and trying to get out of the rough with a putter.

It's time that we have the courage to protect consumers immediately by going after the speculators and developing a real energy policy that is in keeping with the courage of this country, the innovation of our private sector, and the desire to step up as each generation to the challenge at hand.

HEALTH CARE REFORM AND THE ROLE OF CONGRESS

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, think if the government

runs all health care it will be easy for your doctor to make decisions to get you the right care at the best price? Well, Congress doesn't think so.

In the 110th Congress, 452 separate bills were introduced to fix problems of Medicaid and Medicare.

What if your doctor prescribes home care rather than send you to a nursing home at three times the cost? It takes an act of Congress to change the rules.

Screening for glaucoma? Well, it depends on who you are. Otherwise, ask Congress to change the law.

Maybe you have multiple sclerosis that prevents you from working and you cannot afford the medication. You have to wait 2 years to qualify for help, unless Congress changes the law.

When less than one in four Americans think Congress is doing a great job, should Congress really be in charge of your health insurance?

Let's fix the problems. Focus on value not volume, quality not quantity, and stop wasting hundreds of billions of health care dollars.

There should be no bureaucracy between you and your doctor. Reform, yes. Oversight, yes. Accountability, transparency, absolutely. But becoming an insurance company, let's think about it.

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING IN IRAN

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo what President Obama said the other day. Something is happening in Iran, and it is something remarkable and inspiring.

Thanks to Iranian citizen journalists and technological innovations and communications, the entire world has seen the pictures from Iran of those who are giving their lives in the cause of freedom and democracy. The pictures show hundreds of thousands of people, men in green, women in chadors, young and old, rich and poor, taking to the streets in unity in peaceful protest. They have used the universal human right to peacefully assemble and to seek redress of grievances in the full knowledge it may cost them their lives.

They go out today in mourning for the scores of victims of shameful acts of repression. Their determination and bravery have the whole world watching, waiting and inspired, and hoping that Iranian authorities, with the support of the ayatollahs, will do the right thing.

□ 1030

ABC SHOULD AIR BOTH SIDES OF HEALTH CARE DEBATE

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)